

Remarks

Reconsideration of the subject application is requested.

Claims 1-13 and 15-16 are pending. In this paper, no claims are amended.

Items 1, 2, 3, and 4 on page 2 of the Office action are noted with thanks.

The status of claims 1-10 and 13 as being allowable is acknowledged with thanks.

Claims 11, 15, and 16 stand rejected for alleged obviousness from Suzuki '852. This rejection is traversed.

The priority date of the instant application is December 4, 2000, which is before the U.S. filing date of Suzuki '852. Suzuki '852 is a §102(e) reference used in an obviousness rejection. Suzuki '852 also has the same assignee as the instant application, namely Nikon Corporation. On the priority date, the priority application to the instant application was filed with the JPO on behalf of Nikon Corporation, as indicated on the attached copy of the cover page of the priority document (of record), on which the Japanese characters for "Nikon Corporation" are circled.


In view of the above, Suzuki '852 should be removed as prior art under 35 U.S.C. § 103(c).

Therefore, all the pending claims are in condition for allowance, and action to such end is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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【書類名】 特許願
【特許】 2000-368005(12.12.04)

【受付日】 平12.12.04

頁: 1/ 1

【書類名】 特許願
【整理番号】 00-00248
【あて先】 特許庁長官殿
【国際特許分類】 H01L 21/027
【発明者】

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【手数料の表示】
【予納台帳番号】 049892
【納付金額】 21,000円

【提出物件の目録】
【物件名】 明細書 1
【物件名】 図面 1
【物件名】 要約書 1
【包括委任状番号】 9717872

【ブルーフの要否】 要